

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJ: HARVESTING OF OPIUM POPPY CAPSULES

1. FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS WERE MADE DURING FIELD TRIP
JULY 4-7 BY USAID OFFICER:

A. HARVEST OF DRY OPIUM POPPY CAPSULES UNDERWAY IN
DENIZLI, BURDUR, USAK AND SOUTHERN AFYON PROVINCES WITH OTHER
AREAS NEARING MATURITY. OFFICER SAW NO RPT NO EVIDENCE OF
INCISION FOR OPIUM, AND SOIL PRODUCTS OFFICE (TMO) TEAM
MEMBERS TOLD HIM THEY TOO HAD SEEN NO CASES OF INCISION
(DEA STAFF MEMBERS ALSO REPORT NO EVIDENCE OF INCISION).
NEARLY ENTIRE AREA NOW IS BEYOND INCISION PERIOD WITH VERY
FEW FIELDS HAVING ANY BLOSSOMS REMAINING.

B. FARMERS WHO WERE CONTACTED SAID THAT THEY WERE
NOT ALLOWED TO HARVEST UNTIL FIELD WAS MATURE AND HAD BEEN
INSPECTED BY TMO REPRESENTATIVE. FARMERS HAVE BEEN GIVEN
SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO REMOVE CAPSULES WITHOUT STEM.
THEY ARE ALSO TOLD THEY SHOULD CUT CAPSULES TO REMOVE SEED AND
NOT BREAK IT INTO MANY PIECES. THESE STRICT HARVESTING RULES
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PERMIT EASY IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE INCISION AND FOREIGN MATTER

THAT MAY BE WITH CAPSULES AT TIME OF PURCHASE. PURCHASING HAS NOT YET BEGUN BUT ONE TMO OFFICIAL REPORTED HE HAD FUNDS ALLOCATED FOR PURCHASING AT A PRICE RANGE OF TL 21 TO 12.25 FOR CROP PLANTED FALL 74 AND TL 17 TO 10 FOR SPRING-PLANTED CROP.

C. WHILE UNUSUALLY HEAVY RAINS IN REGION HAVE DIMINISHED OVER LAST 10 DAYS, FARMERS ARE ANXIOUS TO HARVEST. SOME OF CROP HAS BEEN DAMAGED BY HAIL AND HEAVY RAINS. MOISTURE ENTERING NEAR MATURE CAPSULES HAS CAUSED BLACKENING AND ROTTING OF SOME. FARMERS ARE CONCERNED BUT EXTENT OF LOSS NOT LIKELY TO BE SERIOUS IF DRYER WEATHER CONTINUES. CHANCE OF EXTENSIVE RAIN IN MID-JULY IS REMOTE.

2. DEA MEMBERS HAVE NOTED THAT TRAFFICKERS ARE NOT RPT NOT IN POPPY AREA ENCOURAGING FARMERS TO COLLECT GUM FOR ILLEGAL YALE. FORMER MAJOR TURKISH TRAFFICKERS, ACCORDING TO DEA'S OBSERVATION, APPEAR TO HAVE TURNED TO SMUGGLING OTHER COMMODITIES RATHER THAN REESTABLISHING OPIUM CONNECTIONS.
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